



NEWS RELEASE

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HUDGENS ANNOUNCES NEW ARSON DOG FOR GEORGIA

Atlanta – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens announced today that his office has a new canine to help human arson investigators solve suspicious fires in Georgia.

Hudgens said the newest addition to his staff, "Carly," an accelerant detection canine will investigate suspicious fires throughout Georgia. Along with fire officials from across the state, Commissioner Hudgens introduced the canine and her handler today in a brief ceremony held at the Centreplex in Macon, Ga.

"I'm committed to fighting arson and fraud in Georgia," Hudgens said. "By establishing an additional canine accelerant detection team, my office can continue to cover all areas of the state, reaching fire scenes faster and solving more cases."

Carly, a 2-year-old black Labrador, and human partner Fire Investigator Michael Crosby graduated on August 29, 2014 from a 200-hours canine accelerant detection course conducted by the Maine State Police and underwritten by State Farm Insurance Companies. During the course, Crosby and Carly were trained to work as a team, sniffing out petrochemical-based accelerants used by arsonists to start fires. The State of Maine pioneered the training of dogs to work fire scenes, a method that results in considerable savings of time and money in arson investigations.

Since 1993, State Farm has paid for the national program, which trains dogs and handlers for fire departments and law enforcement agencies across the U.S. At the end of the course, a chemist certifies that each dog can discriminate from among many accelerants used to start fires. That certification enables evidence found by the dogs to be used in criminal prosecutions. The dogs will be recertified annually.

"Thanks to training underwritten by State Farm, we can count on Carly's sense of smell to help pinpoint the cause of suspicious fires," Hudgens said. "Her ability will enable investigator Crosby to find evidence more quickly, evidence that can be used to solve more arson cases."

Fire Investigator Michael Crosby joined the State Fire Marshal's Office in 2006 and has more than 20 years of experience in fire and law enforcement.